

Help is  
at hand

Feeling on the  
Edge? Helping you  
get through it



The Royal College of Psychiatrists

## About this leaflet

The person who gave you this leaflet is concerned about how you might be feeling and that you might feel like harming yourself.

When you are so distressed, it can feel as though no one else really wants to know or understand. It can be hard to believe that someone you haven't met before can care about your situation. But there are people who do want to listen and understand. They will want to help you.

This leaflet is for you. It will help you understand what is going on and about the help you can get.

## Who could ever understand?

It can be hard to share private thoughts and feelings, but it can help – and can be the best way of getting through a bad time. Whatever the reasons for your being in the Emergency Department (also called A&E), health professionals care about trying to understand you. They want to help you cope with what's going on in your life and help you to find ways to manage and find answers to your problems.

## But it's happened before, and nothing's changed?

Self-harm can be a way of coping – it is not always possible to stop right away. But perhaps we can help you to find less harmful ways of

coping. We'd also like to help you sort out the problems behind your distress. If you are not yet ready to do this, that's OK; just keep his leaflet in a safe place until you are ready.

## **I am in the Emergency Department – what will happen next?**

You are about to be seen by a nurse or a doctor. He or she will listen to you and try to understand the difficulties that have brought you to the Emergency Department. They can offer you any medical treatment you might need. They can also talk with you about whether you'd like to see a specialist in mental health problems.

## **What happens if I go to a specialist mental health service?**

You meet an experienced listener who has had specialist training and has helped people with all sorts of problems. They will have more time to ask about the problems you are having, and will do their best to help you get through them. They will not be shocked by anything you tell them and will not judge you.

## **Will this help me?**

Just by talking about your worries, fears and distress with someone you can trust can make you feel better. It can also help you to get things clearer in your mind, to feel more hopeful, and to think about possible solutions.



## How else can I find support?

It may feel as though you don't have anyone you can really talk to right now – even friends or family. But there may well be someone who is happy to listen to you – but they do need to know how you feel.

If you have felt like harming yourself, it can be helpful to:

- tell a friend or relative; or
- contact your GP (family doctor); or
- contact one of the organisations listed below; or
- contact your care coordinator or mental health team if you have one; or
- come back to the Emergency Department.

## Can I help myself?

Yes, you can help yourself in lots of ways. You can start by making a 'safety plan' for yourself. A 'safety plan' is a plan you make to help you keep safe which includes what you can do for yourself and who you can speak to if you need support. It is more likely to work because you have chosen the kind of support that you feel comfortable with.

## For young people under 18 especially those under 16

It is important to find support from an adult you can talk to and trust. Please don't feel that you have to cope with all your problems alone. Most young people will turn to their parents or carers. If you feel you need support from

outside your immediate family, please think about speaking to another relative, your teacher, school counselor, school nurse, youth worker or your social worker (if you have one).

## Support organisations for people who are distressed, are experiencing suicidal thoughts or who self-harm and their families

Anything you tell them will be completely confidential. The volunteers are ordinary people who won't judge you. Some of the most popular are listed below. You may contact as many or as few as you like – it's up to you and it's OK to contact more than one.

### **SAMARITANS**

#### **Samaritans:**

Tel: 08457 90 90 90 (24/7); email:

jo@samaritans.org. [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

A 24/7 helpline service which gives you a safe space where you can talk about what is happening, how you are feeling, and how to find your own way forward. Samaritans volunteers are ordinary people from all walks of life who understand that there are sometimes things that you just cannot talk about to the people around you. They know that very often, with some time and space, people are able to find their own solution within themselves.



### **PAPYRUS HOPELineUK:**

Tel: 0800 068 41 41 (Mon to Fri 10am – 5pm and 7pm – 10pm & Weekends 2pm – 5pm).

[www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)

PAPYRUS aims to prevent young people taking their own lives. A professionally staffed helpline provides support, practical advice and information both to young people worried about themselves, and to anyone concerned that a young person may harm themselves. PAPYRUS has a range of helpful resources including HOPELineUK contact cards or call 01925 572444 or Fax 01925 240502 for a sample pack.

## **Specialist help for people who self-harm**

### **Get Connected:**

Tel: 080 8808 4994 (1pm to 11pm).

[www.getconnected.org.uk](http://www.getconnected.org.uk)

Offers help by telephone and email for young people (under 25) who self-harm.

**Selfharm.co.uk:** [www.selfharm.co.uk](http://www.selfharm.co.uk)

A project dedicated to supporting young people who are affected by self-harm.

**TheSite.org** [www.thesite.org](http://www.thesite.org)

TheSite.org offers information and support to all the UK's 16-25 year-olds. It includes specific support and advice about self-harm.

**RecoverYourLife:** [www.recoveryourlife.com](http://www.recoveryourlife.com)  
Internet Self-Harm Support Community. It also provides support for any emotional problems, in addition to self-harm.

## Support specifically designed for children and young people



**Big White Wall:** [www.bigwhitewall.com](http://www.bigwhitewall.com)  
A safe, online, anonymous service for people over the age of 16. Get the support of others who feel like you, 24/7, and learn ways to feel better and how to get on top of your own troubles.



Community Advice & Listening Line  
Mental Health Helpline for Wales  
**0800132 737**  
Llinell Gyngor a Gwrando'r Cymuned  
Llinell Gymorth Iechyd Meddwl ar gyfer Cymru

**CALL Helpline (Wales):** Tel: 0800 132 737.  
[www.callhelpline.org.uk](http://www.callhelpline.org.uk)  
A 24/7 service offering free emotional support and information/literature on mental health and related matters to people in Wales.  
Text 'help' to 81066.



**CALM: Campaign Against Living Miserably:**  
Tel: 0800 585858. [www.thecalmzone.net](http://www.thecalmzone.net)  
Offers help via the website and a helpline for men aged 15-35 who



are feeling depressed or down. Callers are offered support and information. Calls are free, confidential and anonymous. The helpline is open from 5pm – midnight, Sat, Sun, Mon and Tues, every week of the year. London callers may also call 0800 585858 or text 07537 404717, begin the first text CALM1.



### **ChildLine:**

Tel: 08000 111. [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

If you are worried about anything, it could be something big or something small, don't bottle it up. It can really help if you talk to someone. If there is something on your mind, ChildLine is here for you.

### **Consumer Counselling Credit Services:**

[www.cccs.co.uk](http://www.cccs.co.uk)

Free online support service providing anonymous and practical advice about money matters and debt.

### **CRUSE Bereavement Care:**

Helpline: 0844 477 9400; email:

[helpline@cruse.org.uk](mailto:helpline@cruse.org.uk).

[www.crusebereavementcare.org](http://www.crusebereavementcare.org)



### **Depression Alliance:**

Tel: 0845 123 23 20.

[www.depressionalliance.org](http://www.depressionalliance.org)



Information, support and understanding for people who suffer with depression, and for relatives who want to help. Self-help groups, information, and raising awareness for depression.

Email: [information@depressionalliance.org](mailto:information@depressionalliance.org)

**Depression UK:** [www.depressionuk.org](http://www.depressionuk.org)

A national mutual support group for people suffering from depression. Email:

[info@depressionuk.org](mailto:info@depressionuk.org)

**Drinksmarter:**

Helpline: 0800 7 314 314.

[www.drinksmarter.org](http://www.drinksmarter.org)

Call free and at anytime to talk to someone in confidence.

**Mind:**

Infoline: 0300 123 3393

(Mon – Fri 9am – 6pm). [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

Provides information in a range of topics including types of mental distress, where to get help and advocacy. They are able to provide details of help and support for people in their own area. Email: [info@mind.org.uk](mailto:info@mind.org.uk)

**National Debtline:**

Tel: 0808 808 4000.

[www.nationaldebtline.co.uk](http://www.nationaldebtline.co.uk)

Free confidential and independent advice on how to deal with debt problems.

**NHS Direct:**

Tel: 0845 46 47. [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

For health advice and reassurance, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.



## **SANE:**

SANEline: 0845 767 8000 (6pm – 11pm).

[www.sane.org.uk](http://www.sane.org.uk)

Emotional support and specialist information to anyone affected by mental illness, including families, friends and carers. SANE offers 1:1 support via helpline and email services and peer support via an online Support Forum where people share their feelings and experiences of mental illness, as well as exchanging information about treatment and support options.

## **Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide (SOBS):**

Helpline: 0844 561 6855 (9am – 9pm daily).

[www.uk-sobs.org.uk](http://www.uk-sobs.org.uk)

## **UK National Drugs helpline:**

Tel: 0800 77 66 00

A 24/7 service offering free and confidential telephone advice and information for anyone who is concerned, or has questions, about drugs.

## **Support Groups:** [www.patient.co.uk](http://www.patient.co.uk)

Details of UK patient support organisations, self-help groups, health and disease information providers, etc... Each entry is cross-referenced and details are checked annually.

## **Specific support for people living in Scotland**

**Action on Depression** Tel: 0808 802 2020;

[www.actiondepression.org](http://www.actiondepression.org) (Wed 2 – 4pm);

email: [info@actiondepression.org](mailto:info@actiondepression.org)

The National Scottish organisation working with and for people affected by depression.

**Breathing Space** Tel: 0800 83 85 87 open  
24/7 at weekends (6pm Fri – 6am Mon)  
6pm to 2am on Mon – Thurs.  
[www.breathingspacescotland.co.uk](http://www.breathingspacescotland.co.uk). Phone and  
web based service for people in Scotland  
experiencing low mood, depression or anxiety.

**CRUSE Bereavement Care Scotland**  
Tel: 0845 600 2227;  
[www.crusescotland.org.uk](http://www.crusescotland.org.uk)

**NHS24**  
Tel: 08454 24 24 24;  
[www.nhs24.com](http://www.nhs24.com)  
Open 24/7 356 days a year.

**SAMH – Scottish Association for Mental Health** Tel: 0800 917 3466;  
Email: [info@samh.org.uk](mailto:info@samh.org.uk);  
[www.samh.org.uk](http://www.samh.org.uk)  
Information on how and where to find support,  
including help in your own area.

Online version of this leaflet providing  
support for people in distress and those  
trying to help them  
[www.connectingwithpeople.org/ucancope](http://www.connectingwithpeople.org/ucancope)



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## The Royal College of Psychiatrists produces:

- a wide range of mental health information for patients, carers and professionals
- factsheets on treatment in psychiatry, such as antidepressants and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)
- many of our leaflets and factsheets have been translated into other languages including Arabic, Urdu and French.

These can be downloaded from our website:  
[www.rcpsych.ac.uk/info](http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/info)

A range of materials for carers of people with mental health problems has also been produced by the 'Partners in Care' campaign. These can be downloaded from  
[www.partnersincare.co.uk/](http://www.partnersincare.co.uk/).

For a catalogue of our materials, contact the Leaflets Department, Royal College of Psychiatrists, 17 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8PG. Tel: + 44 (0)20 7235 2351 ext. 6259; Fax: + 44 (0)20 7235 1935; Email: [leaflets@rcpsych.ac.uk](mailto:leaflets@rcpsych.ac.uk).

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The leaflet reflect the best available evidence at the time of writing

## NO HEALTH WITHOUT MENTAL HEALTH



[www.rcpsych.ac.uk/info](http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/info)  
The Royal College of Psychiatrists is a charity registered in England (228636) and in Scotland (SC038369).

